Saguaro National Park

3693 South Old Spanish Trail Tucson, AZ 85730

520-733-5100 phone 520-733-5183 fax

Saguaro National Park News Release

For Immediate Release February 22, 2011

Contacts: Saguaro East - Melanie Florez (520) 733-5153

Saguaro West - Richard Hill (520) 733-5158

MARCH PROGRAMS OFFERED AT SAGUARO NATIONAL PARK

Saguaro National Park is offering special programs this winter and spring that explore the park's wonderful natural and cultural history. Come along on a naturalist-led evening walk in the park, or join a local expert for a presentation in one of our visitor centers. *Programs are offered at both the east and west districts*. Interpretive programs are free, but park entrance fees apply. Program schedules are subject to change – call the visitor centers for schedule updates or for reservations.

Special Programs offered at the Tucson Mountain District (Saguaro West) include:

March 4 and 25 3:30 p.m. Silhouettes at Sundown 2½ hours, 2½ mile hike

Trek along an arroyo as the setting sun magically silhouettes the Southwest's most famous icon – the giant saguaro. Reservations are required, please call 733-5158. The March 25th hike begins at 3:45 p.m.

March 5 3:00 p.m. Gourd Artist Bonnie Gibson talk/slideshow, 1 hour Guest Speaker Bonnie Gibson is an accomplished artist in many forms of 3 dimensional arts and fine crafts. Her current passion is creating fine art from hardshell gourds. Many of her gourds will be for sale as will her signed book, "Gourds: Southwestern Techniques and Projects." To see some of Ms. Gibson's works, visit her website at arizonagourds@gmail.com. This program is wheelchair accessible.

March 6 3:00 p.m. Wildflowers of the Tucson Mountains

Guest speaker Dr. Brad Fiero teaches at Pima Community College. He will introduce us to some of the many wildflowers that adorn the Tucson Mountains. The presentation will begin with a 40 minute auditorium presentation, followed by a 20 minute walk in the cactus garden. *This program is wheelchair accessible.*

March 13 2:30 p.m. Wasson Peak Moonlight Hike 6½ to 7 hours, 8 miles

This hike climbs 1,700 feet to the highest point in the Tucson Mountains. Enjoy the 360° view of the sunset; then descend by the light of the moon. The hike is at an easy pace but is considered difficult due to the elevation gain and hiking after dark. *Reservations are required*, and can be made by calling 733-5158.

March 15 3:45 p.m. Sunset Hike 3½ mile hike

This 3½-hour hike climbs 700 feet (with some switchbacks) before reaching a beautiful ridgeline for the sunset. The descent is by the light of the moon. *Reservations are required*, and can be made by calling 733-5158.

March 16 4:30 p.m. Moon Take Night Make Day Hike 2½ mile hike

Hikers on this gentle, relatively flat 3-hour hike travel up a desert wash during the transition from day to night, enjoy the sunset atop a hill, then return under the moonlight. *Reservations are* required, please call 733-5158.

March 18 7:30 p.m. Moonrise Over the Mountains 45 minute patio talk
Relax around a campfire on the visitor center patio as the full moon rises above the cactus forest. Bring a lawn

chair and warm clothing. No reservations required. *This program is wheelchair accessible.*

March 26 2:00 p.m. Saguaro Book Club 13/4 hour discussion

George Olin's book, "House in the Sun" is the March book for Saguaro Book Club, which will meet in the Environmental Education Building at Saguaro National Park West. *This program is wheelchair accessible.*

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Special Programs offered at the Rincon Mountain District (Saguaro East) include:

March 2 2:00 p.m. With or Without Water easy 2 mile hike Join park staff on a 2-hour hike to discover how seasonal rains impact Saguaro National Park and you.

7:00 p.m. **Star Party**

Join park naturalists for an introduction to astronomy and a look at the desert night sky. Telescopes and binoculars will be available. Reservations are required, and can be made by calling 733-5153. Program is wheelchair accessible.

March 4, 11, 18 & 25 8:00 a.m. Desert Bird Walk easy hike

Join volunteer naturalists Vicki Powers and Ralph Terry for an easy 2-hour walk in search of desert birds. Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring water.

March 4, 7, 11, 14, 18, 21, 25 & 28 9:00 a.m. **Cowboys in the Rincon Valley** 21/2 mile Hike Join a park naturalist on this 3-hour hike to explore the history and nature of the Rincon Valley. Meet at the visitor center, then caravan to the Hope Camp Trail. Wear comfortable hiking shoes, a hat and bring water and a snack.

11:00 a.m. March 6, 20 & 27 The Places in Between auditorium presentation With human populations still on the rise, the wide open spaces available for protection are shrinking. Join park staff in the visitor center auditorium to find out about on-going efforts to ensure that critical migratory links remain intact. Program is wheelchair accessible. &

March 10 7:00 p.m. **Charismatic Herpetofauna: Gila Monsters**

Join biologist Brian Park in the visitor center auditorium as he shares the natural history of the only venomous lizard in Northern America. Get all of your questions answered about the amazing Gila Monster. Reservations are <u>required</u>, and can be made by calling 733-5153. Program is wheelchair accessible.

5th Annual Fiesta de Saguaro special cultural event March 12 10:00 a.m. Join Saguaro National Park as we celebrate our Hispanic heritage, history and culture. A full day of activities is planned, including craft demonstrators, Mariachi music and folklorico dancers, special presentations, and children's arts and crafts. Traditional Mexican food will be available for purchase. Free shuttle service will also be offered from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Call the visitor center at 520-733-5153 for more information.

March 30 7:00 p.m. **Tortoises of the United States** auditorium presentation Join park naturalist Bob Brandner to discover the different species of tortoises found in the United States and which ones call Arizona home. This program will be held in the visitor center auditorium and reservations can be made by calling (520) 733-5153. Program is wheelchair accessible. &

Daily Programs

The park's two districts offer additional daily interpretive programs not listed here. Contact either of our visitor centers for updated schedules, or visit our website online at http://www.nps.gov/sagu/planyourvisit/things2do.htm.

Visitor Center Locations/Phone Numbers

Both visitor centers are open daily from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, except Christmas Day.

Red Hills Visitor Center (Saguaro WEST) 2700 North Kinney Road Tucson, AZ 85743

(520) 733-5153

Tucson, AZ 85730

3693 South Old Spanish Trail

Rincon Mountain Visitor Center (Saguaro EAST)

(520) 733-5158

For more information about Saguaro National Park and some of its partners, Friends of Saguaro National Park, Western National Parks Association, and the Rincon Institute, visit these websites:

www.nps.gov/sagu www.wnpa.org www.friendsofsaguaro.org www.rinconinstitute.org

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